



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Maryland Man Sentenced to 15 Years to Life in Prison For Road Rage Homicide That Took Place in 1990 New Evidence Revived the Case**

WASHINGTON - John B. Holmes, 42, was sentenced today to a prison term of 15 years to life for killing a man more than 20 years ago in an episode of road rage that unfolded at a traffic intersection, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Holmes, formerly of Silver Spring, Md. was convicted of second-degree murder in the killing of Ronald Jones Jr. A jury returned the guilty verdict in July after a trial in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. He was sentenced by the Honorable Judge Michael L. Rankin.

The government's evidence at trial showed that at about 10:15 p.m., on July 13, 1990, Ronald Jones, Jr., 21, who had recently graduated from Norfolk State University and was accepted at Howard University Law School in the fall, was driving three of his friends from Union Station to Houston's Restaurant in Georgetown, when he was cut off approaching the intersection of 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Massachusetts Avenue NW by a car being driven by defendant Holmes. As the two cars stopped at the intersection, Holmes began shouting profanities at Jones and his friends. Holmes then raised a .357 Magnum Smith and Wesson revolver, which he kept loaded in his car, and shot Jones four times, before driving off.

Jones was mortally wounded and died shortly thereafter; the front seat passenger was also shot. Although the murder received extensive media attention at the time, detectives were unable to develop a solid lead. The case grew cold until, many years later, an eyewitness who knew the defendant and was present at the time of the shooting identified Holmes as the killer. Then, 17 years after the offense, the one surviving victim also identified defendant Holmes from a photo array as the person who killed his best friend.

Holmes's conviction is among three successful prosecutions since June 2010 of older homicide cases. In one case, a man was convicted of an 11-year-old murder of a woman whose body was never found. In another, also involving an 11-year-old case, a man was convicted of

killing a man and woman as they sat in a parked car. The U.S. Attorney's Office is committed to investigating these older homicides and recently created a special unit within its homicide section to look into long-unsolved, or "cold" cases.

In announcing today's sentencing, U.S. Attorney Machen commended retired Metropolitan Police Department Detective Willie Wade, who conducted the initial investigation, and Detectives Anthony Duvall and Rita McCoy, also retired, who revived the investigation and developed the two eyewitness identifications. He also commended Metropolitan Police Department Detectives Anthony Brigidini and Kenneth "Todd" Williams of the Cold Case Unit, who participated during the final stages of the investigation and at trial, retired Mobile Crime Technician Lamont Allen, Mobile Crime Technicians Jay Gregory and James Holder, retired Prince George's County Police Officer John Delabrer and Sergeant Rick Fulginetti of the Prince George's County Cold Case Unit, Department of Motor Vehicles Investigator Robert Johnson, and Firearms Technician Michael Mulderig. Additional thanks are extended to the Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Marie-Lydie Y. Pierre Louis, who conducted the autopsy in 1990, and testified at trial. Finally, he thanked paralegal Debra Joyner, who assisted with trial preparation, Victim Witness Program Specialist, Marcia Rinker, who worked with the victims, and Assistant United States Attorney Amanda Haines, who indicted the case and prosecuted it at trial.

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